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Het 'speculum historiale' van Vincent van Beauvais

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Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:

1991

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Voorbij, J. B. (1991). *Het 'speculum historiale' van Vincent van Beauvais: een studie van zijn ontstaansgeschiedenis*. s.n.

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Summary

The Black Friar Vincent of Beauvais (c. 1190-1264) is famous for the 'Speculum Maius'. His work, popular up to the seventeenth century, has had a great impact through frequent quotations by later authors as well as adaptations and translations into medieval vernaculars. Many people are acquainted with the 'Speculum Maius' as a work composed of four parts or *specula* called 'Speculum Naturale', 'Speculum Doctrinale', 'Speculum Morale' and 'Speculum Historiale'. Since the early eighteenth century, however, the 'Speculum Morale' is ranked as an apocryphal part. Afterwards, and especially during the past decades, a mass of new information has come to light, revealing that the 'Speculum Maius' had an intricate genesis which resulted in different versions of several *specula*. The purpose of this study is to communicate and analyse systematically the enormous quantity of newly found material regarding the 'Speculum Historiale'. Furthermore, it aims at the determination of the relations between the versions of this *speculum* and, through this, at a reconstruction of its genesis. Finally, it aims at fitting the successive versions into the evolution of the entire 'Speculum Maius'. The results of this study are presented in two ways: as a step by step argument in chapters 2 to 7, and as descriptions and editions of the new material in Appendices 1.1 to 3.4.

Chapter 2 deals with the life and writings of Vincent of Beauvais. Of his life only little is known. It is certain that the Cistercian abbey of Royaumont, founded by king Louis IX of France, occupied a major place in Vincent's life. His stay there, between c. 1246 and 1259/60, is the part of his biography best documented. In Royaumont, Vincent acted as *lector* and had contacts with king Louis IX which, as will be shown, were not without importance for his main work. Of Vincent's writings, too, only little is known. The 'Speculum Maius' is reputed to be his main work, and of part of his 'Speculum Historiale' he is known to have had a copy prepared by the order of Louis IX. He is also known to have compiled several other works for the king and members of the royal family, among which 'De eruditione filiorum nobilium' and 'De morali principis institutione' are best-known. Besides, we have a series of so-called 'minor works' of which his authorship has not in all cases been established.

Chapter 3 starts by describing the history of modern research into the genesis, sources, backgrounds and nature of the 'Speculum Maius'. After Jacques Echard, who as early as 1708 concluded that the 'Speculum Morale' must be apocryphal, new evidence on the genesis of the 'Speculum Maius' has been brought to light through the researches of, notably, Serge Lusignan and Monique Paulmier-Foucart. Around 1245 the work consisted of two parts: the 'Speculum Naturale' and the 'Speculum Historiale'. Afterwards, the 'Speculum Naturale' was drastically revised, resulting in a new 'Speculum Naturale' and the 'Speculum Doctrinale', whereas the 'Speculum Historiale' was revised in successive stages up to after 1253. After Vincent's death, the 'Speculum Morale' was added to the 'Speculum Maius'. Very probably, however, material from the 'Speculum Morale' originated as part of the earliest version of the 'Speculum Naturale'. Furthermore, it became evident that Vincent drew on sources written by Cistercian monks, particularly the 'Chronicon' by Helinand of Froidmont. It was also found that the 'Speculum Maius' may be counted as one of the Cistercian and Dominican aids for preaching and Bible study, and that the work was part of the tradition of twelfth and thirteenth century *specula*.

Problems which come up in studying the genesis of the 'Speculum Historiale' are discussed next. They are linked up with the work's disposition and the consequences of this in terms of manuscript production, with the lacunal tradition of two versions of the 'Speculum Historiale',

and with the state of the art in identifying textual witnesses and their place in the textual tradition. The following lines may serve as an introduction. In this study five versions of the 'Speculum Historiale' are distinguished, viz. the versions Dijon (symbol: Ha), with 31 books, Klosterneuburg (Hb), with 30 books, Vienna (Hc), with 31 books, Saint-Jacques (Hd), with 32 books, and Douai (He), also with 32 books. Furthermore, two versions of the 'Speculum Naturale' are distinguished: the versions Tournai (Doornik) (Na), with 30 books, and Douai (Nb), with 33 books. Of both the 'Speculum Doctrinale' (Do) and the 'Speculum Morale' (Mo) only one version is known. Within all *specula* individual components are distinguished, some of which have also been found in several versions, as will appear.

When indicating smaller portions of the 'Speculum Maius' Vincent used two different words: *partes* (parts) referring to content, and *volumina* (codices) referring to the physical aspect. These subdivisions do not run parallel to each other. The full text of the 'Speculum Historiale' always takes up more than one manuscript volume, which complicates the manuscript tradition. If, for instance, four *volumina* together offer a complete text of the 'Speculum Historiale', they do not necessarily constitute a homogeneous witness to this text. A distinction is made between collective sets and sets of volumes produced as an integrated whole. In either type of set individual *volumina* may represent different versions of the 'Speculum Historiale'. Such a set may be called contaminated. Observations on a number of volumes lead to the presumption that some of them never belonged to any set. On the contrary, they appear to be isolated texts copied, for instance, as the interests and financial means of a patron demanded. Within the *volumina* themselves contaminations may occur at different levels. The present study confines itself to those cases where, within a single volume, the text of a particular version of the 'Speculum Historiale' is accompanied by more or less substantial passages taken from one or more other versions. It is demonstrated that in their lay-out and decoration, too, *volumina* may present contamination of different versions. A problem of another kind is the lacunal tradition of the Klosterneuburg (Hb) and Vienna (Hc) versions of the 'Speculum Historiale'. A method is described which allows the contents of either of these versions to be broadly reconstructed. An important part is played here by lists detailing the titles of all chapters of the 'Speculum Historiale'. Such lists are found in all versions of the 'Speculum Historiale'.

So far, not much research has been devoted to textual witnesses for the 'Speculum Historiale', or in fact for the other *specula*. Coupled with the fact that for the 'Speculum Historiale' only the Douai (He) version has appeared in print, and for the 'Speculum Naturale' equally the Douai (Nb) version only, this makes quotation from any of the versions into a hazardous problem. For this reason the manner of tackling this problem has been described at some length. For each of the *specula* and their versions witnesses are selected for quotation in the present study.

Chapter 4 describes the quadripartite 'Speculum Maius' on the basis of the text found in the majority of manuscripts and editions. It consists of the 'Speculum Naturale' in the Douai (Nb) version, the 'Speculum Doctrinale' (Do) and 'Speculum Morale' (Mo), both found in only a single version, and the 'Speculum Historiale' in the Douai (He) version. The contents of each of these *specula* are described succinctly. Next follows a summary of the 'Libellus Apologeticus', the general prologue to the 'Speculum Maius' which is present in the 'Speculum Naturale' as well as the 'Speculum Doctrinale' and the 'Speculum Historiale'. The 'Libellus Apologeticus' has come down to us in several versions and redactions. This summary is based on the text which was most widely disseminated: the 'Libellus Apologeticus' (LA) in He, designated LA-4C in this study. In the LA Vincent discusses the plan and the objectives of the 'Speculum Maius' and defends his work and his working methods, the authority of his sources and the content of the 'Speculum Maius'. He also criticizes the final result. Vincent stresses that the 'Speculum Maius'

is an aid for Bible study, intended for his fellow Dominicans in the first place. Furthermore, it appears from the LA that the sheer size of the 'Speculum Maius' did cause problems to its compiler. Excessive copying expenses seem to have resulted in a decision to organize the parts of the 'Speculum Maius' so that they could function as autonomous works. Each part received a name of its own, and each was to be prefaced by the LA.

Finally, the short prologues specific to each *speculum* are summarized. In the 'Speculum Naturale', 'Speculum Doctrinale' and 'Speculum Historiale' these were placed directly after the LA. In the 'Speculum Morale', however, a specific prologue is absent, as is the LA. The short prologues survey the content of the *speculum* in question. They also mention the presence, in the first three *specula*, of summaries of other parts of the 'Speculum Maius'. Both the short prologues and the summaries seem intended to increase the autonomy of the individual *specula*.

Chapter 5 presents a reconstruction of the genesis of the 'Speculum Historiale'. A short introduction (5.1) describes the stages which will be passed through. Next (5.2), versions of the auxiliary components of the 'Speculum Historiale' - the 'Libellus Apologeticus', the short prologue and the summary of other parts of the 'Speculum Maius' - are compared. In the 'Speculum Historiale' two versions of the LA are found: one version (LA-1) in manuscripts of the Dijon (Ha) version; and a second version (LA-4) of which two redactions exist: LA-4A in copies of the Vienna (Hc) version, and LA-4C in copies of the Saint-Jacques and Douai (Hd and He) versions. LA-1 lacks quite a lot of information on the 'Speculum Maius', but it is supplemented by a dedicatory letter ('Epistola') from Vincent to king Louis IX which is found in Ha. The versions of the LA show evidence of different structurings of the 'Speculum Maius': a bipartite work (LA-1, supplemented by the 'Epistola'), a quadripartite work divided into three volumes (LA-4A), and a quadripartite work in four volumes (LA-4C). From the dedicatory letter it appears that LA-1 accompanies an unfinished 'Speculum Maius'. When Vincent wrote this letter, only the first half of the 'Speculum Historiale' had been completed. On account of lacunae in the text tradition it is uncertain if the Klosterneuburg (Hb) version also contained a 'Libellus Apologeticus'. Of the short prologue two versions are found: the first (Phist-1) in manuscripts of Ha, and the second (Phist-2) in copies of Hc, Hd and He. The main differences between the two versions concern statements on the subdivision of the 'Speculum Maius' into *partes*, the contents of the 'Speculum Naturale', and the exact location of the summaries in the several *specula*. Phist-1 describes a bipartite 'Speculum Maius', Phist-2 a quadripartite one. It is not clear whether Hb also included a short prologue; the available material provides no clue to this. Of the third supporting component, the summary of other parts of the 'Speculum Maius', too, two versions have been recovered: the one (Rnat-1) in manuscripts of Ha, the other (Rnat-2) in manuscripts of Hc, Hd and He. Both versions present a brief survey of natural history, sins and virtues, and arts and sciences, as dealt with in the 'Speculum Maius'. Rnat-1 and Rnat-2 differ in their description of the arts and sciences. The Klosterneuburg version is likely to have had the summary as well, but it remains unclear whether this will have been Rnat-1 or Rnat-2.

5.3 sketches the correspondences and differences between the versions of the 'Speculum Historiale's main component, the *Historiale* (Hist). This has been met in five versions: Hist-1 in manuscripts of Ha, Hist-2 in Hb, Hist-3 in Hc, Hist-4 in Hd, and Hist-5 in He. The size of this component forces a further subdivision. For this reason Hist is divided into two roughly equal parts, the caesura being one also recognized by Vincent. The two parts are designated *pars 1* and *pars 2*. In the case of *pars 1* the five versions of Hist show significant differences in a number of passages. On the one hand we see how the same material has been differently divided over successive books; on the other hand, according to which version we are looking at, certain subjects may be treated on a larger or a smaller scale or be absent altogether. In *pars 1* Hist-1,

Hist-2 and Hist-3 agree against Hist-4 and Hist-5. Within these two groups further distinctions can be made, Hist-1 opposing Hist-2 and Hist-3, while Hist-4 and Hist-5 also differ in some points. From the latest event mentioned, a reference to pope Innocent IV, it may be assumed that the text of *pars 1* dates after June 1245 in all versions. For *pars 2* the situation is more complex. This *pars* shows such a high measure of agreement in Hist-1, Hist-3 and Hist-5 that these versions may be judged identical. For this reason only Hist-5 is extensively dealt with here. The second part of Hist-2, on the other hand, differs considerably from Hist-5. Here again, we have the same matter differently divided over successive books. A greater importance attaches, however, to the differences in content, which are considerable. These are centred on the moralising anthologies from works by Church Fathers and some important later authors and on historiographical subjects. In Hist-2 the share of the anthologies is much more substantial than in Hist-5; conversely, the historiographical material is more substantial in Hist-5 than in Hist-2. Quite considerable differences are found between the last books of Hist-2 (29-30) and their counterpart in Hist-5 (30-32). Hist-5 here contains substantial passages presenting mainly contemporary material wholly lacking in Hist-2. *Pars 2* of Hist-4 corresponds in general with Hist-5, but here, too, a number of passages of historiographical information are absent. The conclusion is that *pars 2* of Hist-4 takes up an intermediate position between Hist-2 and Hist-5. *Pars 2* of all versions of Hist does indeed conclude its historical narrative with a date suggesting a time of writing between late June and c. 20 November 1244, but events recorded elsewhere in this part lead to different datings: for *pars 2* of Hist-1, Hist-3 and Hist-5 the *terminus post quem* 10 July 1254; for *pars 2* of Hist-4 the period between late March 1253 and the moment when *pars 2* of Hist-1, Hist-3 and Hist-5 was completed; and for *pars 2* of Hist-2 the period between early July and October 1244.

Placing *pars 1* and *pars 2* of the Hist versions side by side, we now come to suspect that Hist-1 and Hist-3 do in fact consist of combinations of the two *partes* belonging to different phases. This provides a line of argument continued in the reconstruction of the genesis of the 'Speculum Historiale' (5.4). It is suggested that the versions of this *speculum* consist of varying combinations of versions of its components. The manuscript tradition gives no cause for supposing that the versions of the 'Speculum Historiale' came into being as accidental combinations in the course of time. It is argued that developments in the master copy of the 'Speculum Historiale' resulted in different versions and that there were two *exemplaria*, one for the first half of this *speculum* (with the LA, Phist, Rnat, and *pars 1* of Hist) and one for the second half (with *pars 2* of Hist). The first half of Ha dates after June 1245, the second after July 1254. It is argued that the second half was added to the first half of Ha at a later stage. In this context it is suggested that perhaps a rapid dissemination of the first half of Ha was promoted by Cistercians, and that about a decade later a second half was added. This was not, however, the text originally intended to form a whole with Ha, but a revision of it: the second half of He (*pars 2* of Hist-5). The exemplar of the second half (*pars 2* of Hist-2) was completed after June 1245, with a text running roughly to July-October 1244. Meanwhile the exemplar of the first half of the 'Speculum Historiale' had undergone revision resulting in *pars 1* of Hist-2. Together, these two exemplars formed version Hb. In a following phase (Hc) both exemplars were again revised. The revisions were related to the development of the 'Speculum Maius' from a bipartite into a quadripartite work, and besides with drastic interventions in *pars 2* of Hist-2. The exemplar for the second half of the 'Speculum Historiale' was withdrawn. Inconsistencies in LA-4A that must have escaped Vincent's attention, variants in Phist-2, as well as the list of chapter headings in Hc make one suspect that the exemplar for the first half of the 'Speculum Historiale' did remain available for copying. But this was adapted as the changes in the second half of the 'Speculum Historiale' and elsewhere in the 'Speculum Maius' progressed. Copies from this

exemplar ultimately had the final version of the exemplar for the second half joined to them (*pars* 2 of Hist-5). With version Hd a new series of interventions in the exemplars of the 'Speculum Historiale' became visible. In the first half the changes were comparatively slight. The exemplar for the second half (*pars* 2 of Hist-4), however, showed radical changes with respect to earlier versions, amongst them the omission of substantial parts of anthologies, and expansion of the historiographical element. The revision of this part was completed after March 1253. Eventually the exemplars of the 'Speculum Historiale' underwent a further revision resulting in He. In the exemplar for the first half minor changes were introduced once more, while in the exemplar for the second half a series of new, especially historiographical data were inserted.

In 5.5 a limited number of passages from other parts of the 'Speculum Maius' are discussed which give information on the 'Speculum Historiale'. First the versions of the 'Libellus Apologeticus' for the Tournai (LA-2) and Douai (LA-4B) versions of the 'Speculum Naturale' and for the 'Speculum Doctrinale' (LA-3) are discussed and compared with those for the 'Speculum Historiale'. It appears that the 'Speculum Maius' has passed through more evolutionary stages than could be assumed on the basis of the information from the 'Speculum Historiale'. In LA-2 we read of a bipartite 'Speculum Maius', in LA-3 of a tripartite, and in LA-4B of a quadripartite one in three volumes. LA-2 confirms the information discussed above from the dedicatory epistle and Phist-1 regarding the make-up of the bipartite 'Speculum Maius' ('Speculum Naturale' and 'Speculum Historiale').

Certain characteristics make one suspect that, in contrast to LA-1, LA-2 represents a completed 'Speculum Maius'. LA-3, naming the 'Speculum Doctrinale' as a *pars* besides the 'Speculum Naturale' and 'Speculum Historiale', takes up a position in between LA-2 and the LA-4 redactions. Characteristics of LA-3 and the LA-4 redactions lead to the assumption that Phist-2 was put together while a tripartite 'Speculum Maius' was being worked on. At a time when a quadripartite 'Speculum Maius', incorporating the 'Speculum Morale', was being edited, LA-4 was composed on the basis of LA-3, passages referring to a tripartite 'Speculum Maius' being inadvertently left unchanged.

A discussion then follows of the relations between the Tournai (Na) version of the 'Speculum Naturale', a constituent of the bipartite 'Speculum Maius', and the Douai (Nb) version of the 'Speculum Naturale', the 'Speculum Doctrinale' and the 'Speculum Morale', all of them part of the quadripartite 'Speculum Maius'. The manner in which matter from Na got distributed over the later 'Speculum Naturale' (Nb), 'Speculum Doctrinale' and 'Speculum Morale' is described. The discussion also involves the summary (Rnat) found at the front of the 'Speculum Historiale'. The two versions of Rnat prove to run parallel with Na. Discrepancies between the versions of Rnat and the two versions of the 'Speculum Naturale' further suggest that Rnat is rather a blueprint for this *speculum* than a summary of it.

The discussion focusses on the contents of Na and Nb, and particularly on the summary of the 'Speculum Historiale' included in book VIII of Na (Rhst-1) and at the end of book XXXIII in Nb (Rhst-2). The final passage of Rhst-1 proves to agree almost word for word with passages from Hist-2, the main component of the Klosterneuburg (Hb) version. Rhst-1 covers the same time-span as Hb, ending in 1244. Rhst-2, on the other hand, links up with Hist-1, Hist-3, Hist-4 and Hist-5. In Rhst-2 the text of Rhst-1 was first continued to the year 1250, but after March 1253 it underwent a further revision. Discrepancies between the versions of Rhst and the versions of the 'Speculum Historiale' make one suspect that we have here, not a summary, but a blueprint existing before the 'Speculum Historiale' was completed. Hints of this are also found in the 'Memoriale Temporum', a separate edition of Rhst-1 put into circulation around 1244, and further in verbal parallels between Rhst-1 and Hist-2.

The components of the other *specula* discussed here prove to support and supplement the reconstruction of the genesis of the 'Speculum Historiale' proposed in 5.4.

In chapter 6 data are related together which can throw a light on Vincent's motives to keep revising the 'Speculum Historiale', on influences to which his work has been subject, and on material incorporated in it. Particular attention is given to the additions to the historiographical element and the shortening of the anthologies from Church Fathers. The historiographical additions do not just show that Vincent gradually came to give more attention to contemporary history. An important part of these additions turns out to bear on the French kings, their role as champions of christianity, and the legitimacy of Capetian kingship. It looks very much as if the stimulus for these enlargements should be found in the entourage of king Louis IX, and as if, through his contacts with the court, Vincent gained access to sources that would otherwise have remained closed to him. Other changes, both in the historiographical material and in the excerpts from theological works by his brethren, suggest a direct influence from Dominican circles. A closer look at the anthologies from Church Fathers in the Klosterneuburg (Hb) version, drastically curtailed in later versions, reveals a relation with the Douai version (Nb) of the 'Speculum Naturale'. The material from Hb that is no longer found in later versions proves to have been given a place in those parts of Nb which show major changes and enlargements in comparison with the first version of the 'Speculum Naturale' (Na). This suggests that when revising the 'Speculum Maius' Vincent thought certain parts of the 'Speculum Historiale' better suited to this new 'Speculum Naturale'. Lastly there are indications for a relation between the shortening of the anthologies and the composition of certain of Vincent's so-called minor works. In a number of places in versions Hd and He where anthologies have been reduced in comparison with Hb, Vincent states that he has already incorporated *flores* from these authors in other works. An exploratory investigation in one of Vincent's minor works, the 'Liber de laudibus beate virginis Marie' reveals striking parallels with anthologies from Hb. This makes one suspect that some of Vincent's minor works were composed with the aid of the Hb anthologies and led to a reduction of these anthologies in the later versions of the 'Speculum Historiale'.

Chapter 7 summarizes the findings and suggests the possible outcome of future investigations of Vincent's oeuvre.

The text is supported by a number of appendices. Appendices 1.1-1.4 present characterizations of the Dijon (Ha), Klosterneuburg (Hb), Vienna (Hc) and Saint-Jacques (Hd) versions of the 'Speculum Historiale', in that order. These appendices, which should also be useful for assigning the contents of new witnesses for the text of the 'Speculum Historiale' to their appropriate version, are intended for the reader who wants to be informed on individual versions. The Douai version (He) is used as a reference text. A description of this version is found in chapter 4. Appendix 1.5 serves to refer the reader to further passages in the preceding appendices where features of He have been described.

Appendices 2.1-2.3 present a survey of the manuscripts and editions of the 'Speculum Maius' known at the time when this dissertation was completed. In Appendices 3.1-3.4, finally, four passages from the Klosterneuburg version are edited to which frequent reference is made in this study.